

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE CLAIMS

Independent claim 23 has been amended to clarify that the cassette of the radiographic reading system of the present invention comprises a front member, a back member positioned opposite to the front member, and a sheet-shaped recording medium adhered to the back member for receiving the radiographic image information of the object through the front member, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 19, lines 19-20 and page 22, lines 3-8.

In addition, independent claim 23 has been amended to clarify that the apparatus to read out the radiographic image information comprises a detection section to detect whether or not the recording medium rises or peels off from the back member, and that the control section controls the apparatus according to an output of the detection section so as to prevent damage of the apparatus and the cassette as supported by the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 74, line 21 to page 75, line 15.

Still further, claims 23-26 have been amended to make some minor grammatical improvements and/or to correct some minor

antecedent basis problems so as to correct the informalities pointed out by the Examiner and put the claims in better form for issuance in a U.S. patent.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered and that the objection to the claims be withdrawn.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 23, 24 and 26 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of the combination of USP 6,781,144 ("Yonekawa") and USP 4,733,307 ("Watanabe"), and claim 25 was rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of the combination of Yonekawa, Watanabe and USP 5,816,177 ("Brocklehurst"). These rejections, however, are respectfully traversed with respect to these claims as amended hereinabove.

According to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 23, a radiographic image reading system is provided which includes a cassette to record radiographic image information of an object to be radiographed and an apparatus to read out the radiographic image information. As recited in amended independent claim 23, the cassette comprises a front member, a back member positioned opposite to the front member, and a sheet-shaped recording medium adhered to the back member for receiving the radiographic image information of the

object through the front member, wherein the front and back members are relatively attachable to each other so as to form an accommodation space in which the sheet-shaped recording medium is accommodated and detachable from each other to open the recording medium. In addition, as recited in amended independent claim 23, the apparatus to read out the radiographic image information comprises: an insertion section to insert the cassette into the apparatus, a conveying section to convey the cassette within the apparatus, a separation section to separate the back member from the front member, a holding section to hold the back member and the recording medium for reading out the radiographic image information, a scanning section to read out the radiographic image information from the recording medium by relative movement between the recording medium and the scanning section, a peeling off section to peel off the back member and the recording medium from the holding section, a combination section to combine the separated front member with the back member and the recording medium again, wherein the peeling off section peels off the back member and the recording medium from the holding section, after the front member is combined with the back member again by the combination section, a detection section to detect whether or not the recording medium rises or peels off from the back member, and a control section to control the apparatus according to an output

of the detection section so as to prevent damage of the apparatus and the cassette.

That is, as recited in clarified amended independent claim 23, the radiographic image reading system of the present invention comprises a detection section which detects whether or not the recording medium (the photostimulable phosphor sheet) adhered to the back member (back panel) rises or peels off from the back member, and a control section to control the apparatus according to an output of the detection section (i.e., to stop scanning of the recording medium by the scanning section when the detection section detects rising or peeling off of the recording medium from the back member) so as to prevent damage of the apparatus and the cassette (i.e., destruction of the recording medium and/or damage to the condenser mirror and light guide of the scanning section).

By contrast, Yonekawa (which is assigned to the same assignee as the present application) discloses a radiographic image reading apparatus having a structure for detecting falling of the back panel from the holding member. It is respectfully submitted that the object and structure of the apparatus disclosed in Yonekawa is quite different from the object and structure of the claimed present invention, and that Yonekawa does not disclose, teach or suggest a detection section to detect

whether or not the recording medium rises or peels off from the back member and a control section to control the apparatus according to an output of the detection section so as to prevent damage of the apparatus and the cassette, as according to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 23.

In addition, it is respectfully submitted that Watanabe and Brocklehurst also fail to disclose, teach or suggest a detection section to detect whether or not the recording medium rises or peels off from the back member and a control section to control the apparatus according to an output of the detection section so as to prevent damage of the apparatus and the cassette, as according to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 23.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claim 23 and claims 24-26 depending therefrom all clearly patentably distinguish over Yonkawa, taken singly or in combination with Watanabe and Brocklehurst, under 35 USC 103.

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In view of the foregoing, entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

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